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WE AIM TO CUT DOWN ERROR AND ESTABLISH TRUTH.

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FIGHT FOR GOLD

FACTIONS IN NEW YORK CHURCH

Swat Each Other in the Jaw and Blood
Flows for Possession of Contents
of Contribution Box

MANY LOVE JESUS, BUT THEY
LOVE THE MONEY MORE

(From New York Press)

A hectic encounter in an aisle of the Union Presbyterian Church, at Sixty-sixth Street and Wood and Avenue following a double collection taken up by rival faction and a wordy war over the receipts, brought a lively climax yesterday morning to the trouble that has been brewing in the congregation for several weeks.

The "pastor's faction" who support Rev. Alexander Waddell, were first out in the collection field. Their ushers appeared at the usual time with regular collection baskets and moved down the aisles from pew to pew. Members of this faction put their offerings in the baskets. Members of the "anti-pastors" faction, who oppose Dr. Waddell, let the wicker receptacles go by without extending a hand or a glance toward the collectors.

Then the collectors of the latter faction appeared with a brand new set of baskets and went over the same route. This time their friends gave freely and graciously, and the "pastor's faction" let their faces. Both sets of collectors began to count receipts and there was intense rivalry as to who should tally most. When the money was counted it was found that the "anti-pastors" had a considerably larger sum than the regulars.

Blow Struck Following Dispute

There was some lively conversation in the back of the church, and a by no means light, blow. John Jackson, as usher for the "anti-pastors" was the recipient, it is said, and it was a "pastorite" who struck him. The usher spectators declare, started to "come back" at his opponent, but men from both sides surrounded them and kept them apart.

This was not the only lively incident in the Union Church's troubles. On Saturday evening the board of trustees, headed by H. D. Frazer, called on Dr. Waddell and asked him for the church charter and certain books. He refused to give them up. He would not even see the delegation. Later, when he met members of it upon the streets, he passed them, they say, without speaking. They declare they have treated him very considerably and have tried to avert trouble.

Change Bolts and Locks.

Three times within twenty-four hours the locks and bolts of the church doors have been changed, and the factions have alternated in the possession of the building. Yesterday George W. Crossland, who heads the pastor's friends, remained with a party in the church almost all night to insure possession for the morning's services. They were still on hand when the hour came to begin. Mr. Frazer and his friends were on the other side of the street. They came in when the services started. Crossland and his followers held the fort too. It was suggested as a compromise that the police of the Sixty-fifth Street and Woodland Avenue Station be given the keys to hold until services were begun each week, but neither side would agree to this.

It was said by the "anti-pastors" that they were going to apply for an injunction to prevent the other side from holding possession of the church funds and building.

ANOTHER ONE

Barely had the strains of the recessional died away in the auditorium of Emmanuel Protestant Episcopal Church Marlborough Street, above Girard Avenue, following the communion services yesterday morning, when the rector, the two opposing accounting wardens and members of the congregation became involved in a free fight in the Sunday school and vestry room.

The dispute lasted about ten minutes, and while it was in progress women and girls stood around with their hands clasped, some murmuring little prayers, while others screamed. Numerous blows were struck, but in the mass of humanity which surged about the room it was almost impossible to see who was doing the punishing.

At one time George Shegog, one of the accounting wardens, was pinned to the floor by four members of the opposing faction, while others attacked his 17 year old son, Harry, and his daughter, Alice.

Bad Words Follow Blows.

After five minutes of pummeling and shoving the physical part of the fight ceased, but the various members who take sides with the rector, Rev. Edward Knight, against the warden, George Shegog, kept up a tongue battle for more than half an hour.

When warden Shegog got free from the mob of men who were attempting to oust him from the church, his hair was disheveled, his necktie was torn from its fastenings, and his clothes were badly soiled. The rector, who was in the vestments during the encounter was flustered and nervous, and refused to make any statement.

The fight started when warden Shegog attempted to take charge of the morning offering. He was prevented from doing so by friends of the rector, and during the encounter the rector took charge of the money.

Police at Evening Service.

To prevent a renewal of the disturbance two special policemen, Scheeklin and Guenther, were detailed to the evening services. This was the second time in seven days that policemen had to be called in the church because of scenes of disorder among the members.

The church was crowded at the evening service, more than three hundred being present. At the conclusion the rector again carried the plates in the vestry room. There he met Warden Shegog, who had come to demand the money. When the rector sighted the policemen he entered the vestry room and placed the plates on the table. Several friends of the rector stood between the plates and Shegog and prevented him reaching them.

Finally after five minutes of wrangling Mr. Knight said:

"If you want the money, Mr. Shegog, you can have me arrested to-morrow."

Against Given Him Money.

Friends of the rector crowded around him and said:

"Don't let him have the money."

"Don't you touch the money, Shegog!" and others warnings. For a time it looked as if the fight would start anew, but when the policemen loomed up the fighting members lost some of their temper.

Mr. Shegog declared last evening that he would swear out additional warrants to-day for the arrest of the men who assaulted him yesterday. He would not say who would be named in these warrants.

It was rumored last evening around the church that the bishop would take a hand in the fight to day and his action is anxiously awaited.

Church Divided Against Itself.

The congregation in Emmanuel Church has long been divided into two factions one favoring the rector and the other supporting the warden. The neutral members of the congregation who go to church solely to worship had hoped that in the eleventh hour the bishop would interfere and prevent a repetition of the disgraceful scenes which were enacted in the church following the election of vestrymen on Easter Monday night, when two policemen had to be called in to quell the disturbance.

The rector, who was arrested on Wed-

nesday, March 27, on a technical charge of embezzlement, was held for the court by Magistrate Kochersperger, at a hearing last Tuesday, and sensational disclosures are promised when the case is given an airing. While none of the members will discuss the situation, it is said some very grave charges will be made and that women members of the congregation will be subpoenaed to testify.

THEISM

IN THE CRUCIBLE

God Idea is Assailed with a Storm of
logic and Fearless Criticism—Only
a Conjecture and not supported
by Fact

ETERNAL ACTIVITY

DISPROVES HIS EXISTENCE

(By Otto Wettstein)

The facts of nature prove that the God, our churches worship is not a fact. The Bible, repudiated by our best minds within the church, their God must now be established upon a scientific basis or a simple denial proves such God is not a fact. This has not and cannot be done. On the contrary, it is but a school boy's problem to demonstrate that an infinite God within an infinite universe is an absolute impossibility. If the arithmetical formula that twice two equals four is final it also proves that twice two cannot possibly equal five. So the self-evident facts of nature prove that a God, however exalted the concept, is not a fact.

Two entities cannot occupy the same place at the same time. Nature is here, there and everywhere; as far as our strongest lenses penetrate infinite expanse and keenest logic can infer we discover natural phenomena, never a God Man and his environments are but a microcosm of an infinite universe. As it is here, so it is everywhere; as it is everywhere, so it is here. If a God existed off in space he would exist here. Positively not existing here, proves beyond doubt he exists nowhere.

A God must be infinite—here and there and everywhere—or he cannot be a God and all it implies. Nature being boundless, God must be boundless, too, or, of course, He would not be everywhere at the same time. A God locally active implies that nature, where He is not active, can exist without a God; which, in fact, proves that nature can exist everywhere without a God. A God is either an absolute necessity in every point of space or a necessity nowhere. But it being an irrefragable fact, demonstrable by science and reason, that nature preoccupies all space it forces us to the conclusion that a God cannot monopolize the same space also.

God implies being, personality; because wisdom, mind, affection, etc., are attributes only of living, organic forms. In the absence of animal structure such personal attributes are utterly unthinkable. We cannot conceive of omniscient ether, wise electricity, listening gravity, loving air or an affectionate soap-bubble! No; we are compelled to first postulate organic living structure, of which forms such physical psychical phenomena are attributes, or we sadly fail to materialize intelligent ideas.

God, then must be a living organic form, or He is utterly unthinkable. But this implies unlimited organic form—a grotesque anomaly. But God must be unlimited or he cannot be a God and all it implies. But a boundless God would be absolutely stationary! If he could move He would not be omnipresent. He could go where he was not, then would not be where he was before moving, and then would be divested of all God-like attributes, which paramently consist in his omnipresence. But if this hypothesis were true—think of it! An infinite aggregation of worlds, blazing suns and systems, filling all space, now sweeping and gyrating with lightning velocity around in him!

The higher intelligence of this century has discarded the gospel according to Moses and the prophets and given us instead a gospel according to Channing, Parker, Swing and Thomas—substituted human fallibility for "Divine Infallibility." Therefore we must not be content to reason away Bible stories like our modern theologians, then stop;

but must subject every idea pertaining to supernaturalism to rigid analysis, then, it found untenable, fearlessly reject all regardless of result. We have based our moral forces on error long enough let us try truth.

Natural phenomena occurring universally throughout the realms of boundless space, paramently necessitates the co-existence of potentialities commensurate with and self-sufficient to produce phenomena in every point of space. Such cogencies the God idea, in crudest or highest conception does not supply.

The constant notion of matters and its infinite changes of combinations, force us to the conclusion that nature must contain within its own integrants, forming the basis of such forms, all the elements and potencies essential to produce the grand tout ensemble of nature Agencies exterior from such constituents would not necessarily be present and operative at all times in all places hence their presence locally everywhere and at all times, would not be absolute but contingent.

These potencies must be ubiquitous, co-existence in extent and synchronical with the material constituting the basis of all phenomena, or the latter would be dependent for their existence upon chance or caprice—liable to be deprived of such essential elements of causation at any time in any part of or in all space, causing either sectional or universal stagnation—death all unknown conditions in nature ("death" being but a change from organic to inorganic life.) In fact it involves the monstrous proposition that nature is universally dead and impotent in and of itself to cause and to perpetuate universal life and motion, and that a supernatural agent, endowed with arbitrary power and omnipotence is, indeed a necessary accessory to account for cosmic existence and life.

Theists have ever conjectured gods, not because such ideas are intelligible to themselves or others, but because they insist nature cannot be explained without them, ignoring the important facts that by parity of reasoning they must conjecture another God to explain their God, and then another to explain this, etc., or, instead of solving existing problems we have now this ultra-mundane being and his mystic methods in addition to the original problem to account for. Is not the question, "How does God create a million animalcules in a drop of water, the flower in the bud, whale in the ocean, child in the uterus, and all these now in process of growth on this and all other worlds?" infinitely more difficult to answer than the question, "How does nature do it?" Do you say, "By the laws he made." In that case that solution do you offer but the identical agencies you repudiate—universal potentialities, which do it all—God not needed.

It certainly is a profound mystery that soil, air and a germ in an ugly bulb can produce a gorgeous and fragrant flower; but we know it does; that a human being grows by purely physical processes; but we know it does; that the universe assumes harmony and order with out a directing mind; but we know it does as far as the entire aggregate of scientific data indicates. Enpassant, what theory have theists ever advanced other than God making the universe by fiat, man out of dust and woman out of bone? Or is it, indeed, more rational to assume that the artificer, whose form "by hands" all cosmic phenomena, in every point of space, at the same time that He should manipulate an infinite aggregation of cosmic bodies in space after the fashion of an acrobat in a circus? That a being out side of or among whirling or flying worlds and burning suns could attend to the minor phenomena like stirpiculture, floriculture, etc., on each world in particular and on all at the same time and survive? Would not the process seem as impossible as a mechanic constructing a watch, his work-bench the periphery of a gigantic fly wheel making thousands of revolutions per minute and rushing through space at light speed? Yet this is what the God hypothesis implies. Science insists matter is force and hence every world contains within itself all the necessary cogencies for its harmonious existence and that of its innumerable passengers during its long journey of ages—hence needs no God.

All "first causes" imply an eternity of time preceding an apocryphal beginning. Before this time all were in an eternal status quo of absolute stagnation. Is it reasonable, then, to infer that what all existing causes would not accomplish during eternity they would ever do? Universal life cannot come from eternal standstill. Hence such activity now proves eternal activity.

LIFE WORTH LIVING

ONLY AFTER WE ARE DEAD

Plea for a Future Life Based upon the Shortcomings of this is an Impeachment of God's Method of Administering Justice.—It Asserts that a Fault Was Made and Scandalizes Duty

ONE AFTER ANOTHER THE THEOLOGICAL PROOFS BREAK DOWN

(By C. Cohen)

London Freethinker

The utility of religion, said John Stuart Mill, did not need to be asserted until the arguments for its truth had, in a great measure, ceased to convince. True as this statement is of religious beliefs in general, it applies with special force to the belief in a life beyond the grave. For, in an increasing measure, religionists rest their case for this belief on its supposed utility either in curbing the passions of men or in satisfying their desires. The clergy see one alleged proof after another breaking down, and they recognize the cute ones first, the duller ones more slowly—that reliable evidence is not to be met with, and that an appeal to vague and only partly understood feelings represents their strongest and most permanent defence. Not that the appeal to sentiment is, at bottom, of any greater value than the appeal to logic, but people have been in the habit of interpreting their feelings in term of the current belief in a future life, and there is a greater apparent strength—that is all.

It would not be correct to say that a sermon entitled "Is Death the End?" by Mr. H. C. Wallace, is entirely an appeal to sentiment, yet Mr. Wallace's arguments—much better stated than usual with the ordinary run of sermons—are really based upon feelings, the meaning of which, must be in dispute whenever one discusses the question of a future life. No one, for example, doubts that people cling to life, that they would willingly prolong life were it not how short is the time for the acquisition of knowledge, how little is gained in proportion to what remains unknown, and how wasteful appears the process by which the genius is stricken down and the fool preserved. All these things are admitted; but to parade them as proof that there is another life in which things are differently arranged is in the highest degree absurd. We have no evidence that in any other direction nature express purpose of satisfying our feelings; on the contrary, our feelings have to adapt themselves to facts, and why not here as well as elsewhere? Moreover, it may be noted that all these may derive a considerable measure of satisfaction once they are regarded from the proper point of view. The curious thing is the manner in which the religionist rules out all other explanations because they conflict with the belief in a future life, and then holds up this as the only theory of satisfaction.

Mr. Wallace's sermon, as I have said, is much above the average of such productions, and two admissions may be noted at the outset. The common cry of the clergy is that life only becomes worth living after one is dead. Mr. Wallace, who is not a clergyman, I fancy, insists that this life is worth living whether there is another one or not, and also that the moral law remains what it is, even though one gives up altogether the belief in a future life. He also sees the futility of quoting the resurrection of Jesus as a proof of immortality. "It does not," he says, "help us much to know that someone, altogether different from our selves, could rise from the dead. A very simple thing to see and to say, but one of those things that not many of the clergy do see, and still fewer of them have the honesty to say."

Mr. Wallace thinks he has three good arguments in favor of a future life, although, to be fair, it must be stated

that he does not regard these as proofs, but only as affording strong indications in favor of immortality. These three arguments are arranged under the headings of human goodness, growth, and greatness, but they are all contained in the sentence that "immortality is necessary in the economy of things. And what Mr. Wallace means by this is that things do not proceed as well here as we should wish them to, and therefore we have reason for assuming that they will proceed more satisfactory elsewhere. Now this, for a Christian Theist, is a most dangerous position to take up. For every Christian believes the world we are living in, equally with the world it is assumed we shall live in, is God's handiwork. Consequently any plea for a future life based upon the shortcomings of this one is really an impeachment of God's methods of administering justice. The plea asserts that things exist, and assumes, without any reason beyond our desire for a better state of things, that events will be differently ordered elsewhere. In addition, there is a further difficulty for the Theist to face, not often enough noticed. If man is only here, as Mr. Wallace says in his "school time," then as our natures are fashioned, roughly perhaps, to meet the exigencies of our present environment, either the future life must resemble the present or we shall be as much out of place as a fish on dry land, or a land-living mammal thrown into the sea. And if the future does resemble the present, then it remains to discover what purpose is served by the break of death, that could not be better served by conferring immortality upon man in this life. Of course, there are very good reasons why we are not immortal here, but a recital of these in no wise helps the Christian to surmount the difficulty.

Mr. Wallace asks, Have all the ages conspired together to produce man that he may be cut down and annihilated? A question permissible as a piece of rhetoric, but quite out of place as an argument. For the ages have conspired to produce man only in the sense that all the ages have conspired to the produce a river, a microbe, or an earthquake. Each is as much the result of antecedent and co-operating conditions as the other. The birth of a man is of no more consequence to "all the ages" than is the birth of a tadpole. If we are not certain of anything else we are tolerably certain of this. John Fiske is also quoted as saying that "God is not like a child that builds a house of cards to blow it down again." But John Fiske knows no more about it than I do or than Mr. Wallace does; and to put an absurd opinion into quotation marks does not rob it of its absurdity, it only emphasises it, and sometimes illustrates the absurdity of those who select it. Besides this is exactly what nature is always doing. The growth of every complex organism is more or less like building a house of cards and pulling it down again. Organs are built up only to be remodelled into something different. Nature at large is a constant process of building to destroy and destroying to build. All nature does what Mr. Fiske says God does not do; and if there is a God then nature is only carrying out God's intention.

It is unfortunate that Mr. Wallace should be constantly appealing to unreasoning sentiment under the impression that he is pursuing a scientific argument. Admitted, but not in the sense that Mr. Wallace intends. He means

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